

Srinivasa Bala Bharati

# PURANDARA DASU

*English Translation*

**Rajeshwara Shastry Shishtla**



**Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,  
Tirupati**

**Srinivasa Bala Bharati - 183**  
(*Children Series*)

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*Telugu Version*

**Dr. S. Gangappa**

*English Translation*

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*Published by*

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**2015**

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T.T.D. Religious Publications Series No. 1169

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First Edition - 2015

*Copies :*

*Price :*

*Published by*  
**Dr. D. SAMBASIVA RAO, I.A.S.**  
Executive Officer  
Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams  
Tirupati.

***D.T.P:***  
Office of the Editor-in-Chief,  
T.T.D, Tirupati.

*Printed at*  
Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Press  
Tirupati.

## **FOREWORD**

If a beautiful garden is to be raised, one needs to take proper care of tender flower plants. In the same way in order to create a good society, great care needs to be taken of young children who are going to be future citizens of India. All their intellectual attainments will be futile if they fail to learn of their culture and its greatness. They need to be told of great men and women of this country so that they are inspired by their ideals. The essentials of our culture should be given to them in the form of simple and charming stories. They will cherish these ideals and be guided by them. They will promote good and they will love the society they live in. They make their families proud and bring great prestige to their country when they grow up into good citizens.

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams have brought out these booklets for children in Telugu under Srinivasa Bala Bharati Series. Although meant for children, they are useful to the elderly too. They have found place in the book shelves of every family. The stories of legendary men and women are narrated in a simple way. We hope that more and more children will read them and profit by them.

I congratulate Editor-in-Chief, TTD for his efforts in bringing out the English translations of SRINIVASA BALA BHARATI SERIES so well. We have received co-operation of many learned men and women in our efforts to popularize this series. I am thankful to them.

In the Service of Lord Venkateswara

  
**Executive Officer,**

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,  
Tirupati.

## **FOREWORD**

Today's children are tomorrow's citizens. They need apt acquaintance with the life-histories of celebrated persons at tender so that they get opportunity to lead their lives in an exemplary way. They will come to know that great things such as Indian culture, basic tenets of life and moral teachings are abundantly available in the life-experiences of great men. It is observed that there is no scope to teach such subjects in school curriculum.

Observing such circumstances the Publication Division of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has published about hundred booklets in Telugu about the lives of famous sages and great men written by various authors under the editorship of Dr.S.B. Raghunathacharya under "Bala Bharati Series". The response to these books is tremendous and it has given impetus to publish them in other languages also. To begin with, some of the books are now brought out in English and Hindi by T.T.D. for the benefit of boys and girls and the interested public.

These booklets, primarily intended to the growing children and also to the elders to study and narrate the stories to their children, will go a long way to sublimate the aspirations of the children to greater heights.

**Editor-In-Chief**

T.T.D.

## **Welcome To Srinivasa Balabharati Series**

The series is the outcome of abundant grace of Lord Sri Venkateswara.

This will be an unfailing source of inspiration to the young.

It enshrines the best of Bharatiya tradition. May this noble endeavour be successful.

India has been known for its culture and civilization, its ethical and dharmic way of life from time immemorial. India has marched ahead with its commitment to dharma, its resistance to adharma, its espousal of life-affirming values and its humane attitude to life as a journey towards God realization. Those who embodied these values in their life have been a beacon of light to us. Their impact is deep on the life we lead. Young boys and girls will find them exemplary and feel proud of their invaluable heritage. They will love their motherland and dedicate themselves to its service.

It is therefore necessary that the young learn about these great men and women so that they will realize their indebtedness to them for their selfless contribution to the enrichment of life. This should indeed be a chief component of true education which ensures the perennial continuity of Indian culture and civilization. SRINIVASABALABHARATI SERIES has come into existence to acquaint the young boys and girls with right perspective of Indian life and values through a series of booklets written exclusively for this purpose describing in brief the lives of great men and women.

We welcome you to share our joy in launching these booklets.

**S.B. Raghunathacharya**  
Chief Editor

## INTRODUCTION

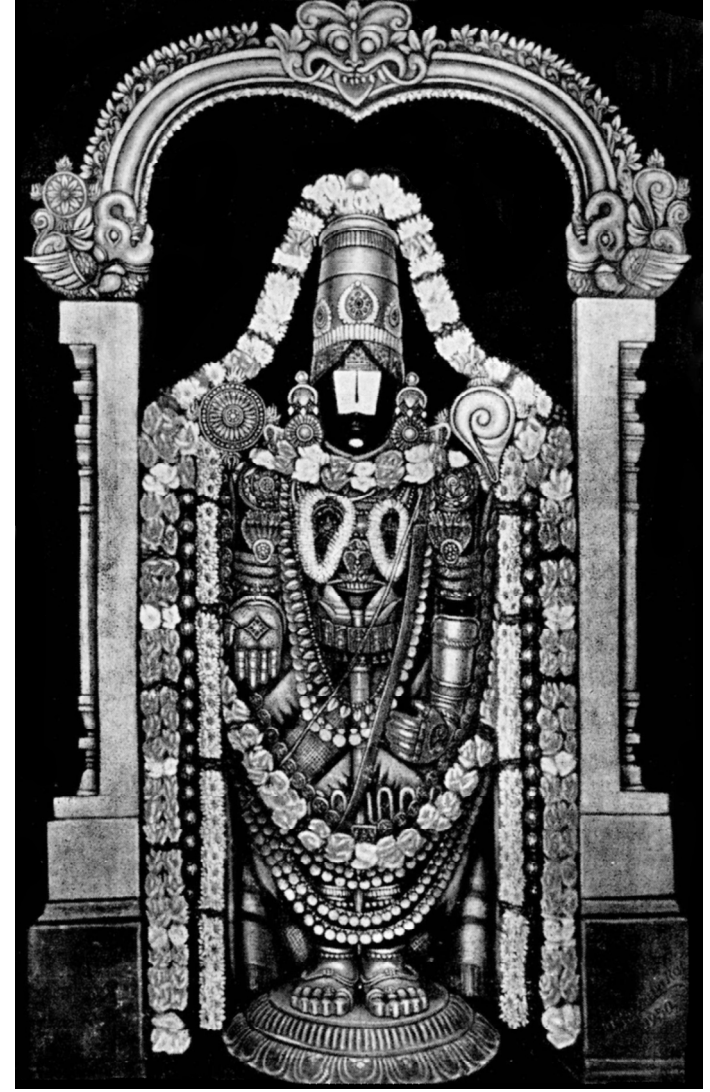
Life is a bubble. Anything may happen the next moment. It is unpredictable. Yet people on this earth devote all their attention and hanker after earning wealth and gold. Never do they realize that they are ruining their present life running after the uncertain future. Everything slips away by the time they understand the fact. But great people grasp the truth with the benevolence of god and enter into the glorifying light piercing through all ignorance. Such a miracle happened in the life of a miser.

There was a diamond merchant in possession of massive wealth. Being begged by a poor Brahmin, he gave away alms. The Brahmin came back after a while and proposed to pawn a nose jewel for money. The rich man was stunned on seeing the nose jewel. It was his wife's ornament. He promised to pay money and made the Brahmin wait till his return. He went home and asked his wife about her nose jewel. Fearing the reactions of her husband, she did not tell that she gave it to a Brahmin and went into the room to take poison and die. Surprisingly the nose jewel appeared in the poison cup. The diamond merchant went to his business spot and found that the ornament was missing. He was puzzled. He realized it as the leela of god. All the material earnings, he thought, are of no value in front of god's grace. He gave away all his property, gold, earnings and money to the needy people. He became a strong devotee of God. Do you know who he is? He

was Srinivasa Naidu who became popular for his wealth as "Navakoti Narayana". In his later life, he became a devoted disciple of Vyasaraya and composed lakhs of lyrics and got the title "Padakavitha pithamaha" of Karnataka.

The devotion, sacrifice or material refusal of this oldest generation of Dasas should be our guide and model.

- Chief Editor







## **PURANDARA DASU**

**- Father of Music**

Thus I recall the great deeds of  
One that ward off all evil mindedness  
By singing of Srihari and his charisma  
In utmost devotion and absolute dedication

**- Prahlada Bhakta Vijayam**

Thus praised Thyagaraju who got liberated through his adoration to music. His guru Vysarayalu praised Purandardasu as the best of all dasas or disciples. A guru praising a disciple is really a rarity. Of course, it is but natural that disciples praise their gurus. So Purandaradasu is a great person.

Being the head of the team of disciples, winning the appreciation of the gurus, writing songs in Kannada, joining the group of vocalists who rendered a clear form to music, Purandaradasu accomplished the great title.

"Karnataka Sangeetha Pitamaha" or the Grand Father of Carnatic system of music.

### **CULTURE MALIGNED**

Purandaradasu was born at a time when the Indians culture was in crisis. The times witnessed many cultural clashes and religious contradictions. Some felt that the people were in the dark. Some argued strongly that they alone were in the right path. Some brave folk ventured to bring in a change. Common people followed whatever tradition or culture they liked. Only a few understood that ultimately truth sustains above all the different

approaches. Indian culture was put to a major damage during the reign of Mohammadans. Owing to the religious beliefs and feelings of the Muslims, Hinduism and its culture got jeopardised. In such a scenario came Basaveshwara and founded Veerashivism. Some other writers in prose also contributed their might to revive the Indian culture and became successful.

### **BLOOMING OF VAISHNAVA CULTURE**

At the same time, with the blessings of Vidyaranya Harihara Rayalu and Bukka Rayalu established Vijayanagara empire. They took a strong vow to protect and promote Hinduism, culture and civilization in the south. During the reign of Proudha Devarayalu and Sri Krishnadevarayalu Vaishnava cult gained prominence. In the accomplished rule of the Vijayanagara empire in the south, many pioneers did their best for the rejuvenation and renaissance of Hinduism. In the place where about 300 years ago Basaveshwara spread Veerashivism, came into prominence the Vaishnava culture. It is quite appropriate to give the credit of all this to Vyasarayalu and Purandara Dasu.

### **SHOULD BECOME ONE AMONG THEM**

A great many people and avadhootas were born between the sacred regions of the Krishna and the Thungabhadra. God is one. Liberation is possible through Bhakthi. Feeling of fraternity among all is necessary. The religious and social movements broke out for spiritual understanding and self motivation. Such

movements revived the ancient Indian culture and paved way to a golden future. There are no people without leaders. A true leader is one who understands the feelings of the people and becomes one among them. In such context was born Purandara Dasu.

### **SRINIVASA BECAME PURANDARA DASA**

Purandara Dasa is not his real name. It is understood he has many names. Srinivasa Nayaka, Sheenappa, Thirumala Rayappa, Thimmappa, Krishna Nayaka, Purandara Vithala etc. The most popular name is Srinivasa Nayaka the son of Varadappanayaka. Srinivasanayaka left all his wealth and wedded to poverty.

Enchanting the name of the lord, he chose Vyasaraya as his patron. He got upadesha from Vyasarayalu and with the sign of "Purandara Vithala" he began writing. And he became Purandaradasa. Since then he became the best vocal singer in Kannada.

### **IN PURANDARA PALLE**

Some historians are of the opinion that purandara ghada is the birth place of Purandara Dasu. It is near Pune. Then it was in the reign of Karnataka kings. Kannada was the local language then. Then it was a centre of diamond business. The father of Srinivasa Nayaka was a well known businessman of diamonds. Historians say that Purandaraghad, or Purandaralayam or Pakashasanapuram was the birth place of Purandara Dasu. Some historical evidences prove that Purandara

is a hamlet near Tirupati of Shivamogga District. In those days, it was a leading commercial centre. There used to be Brahmin families with the name "nayaka". It was known for the educated, the devotees and the intellectuals then. The devotion of Panduranga was very popular. It was situated between Udupi in the West and Pandaripuram of the North East. Srinivasanayaka used to move round towns like Bijapuram, Sollapuram, Purandarapuram, Hampi on business. Later on it is understood that he lived much of the time in Pandaripuram and Hampi cities.

### **PURANDARADASU WITH ANNAMACHARYA**

The life-time of Purandara is taken to be 1484 -1564. When he was about forty, Srinivasa Rayalu visited Vyasarayalu and got his upadesham and took up the name Purandaradasu. Some of the historians feel that the Birth time of Sinivasarayalu was 1480. It also may not be true. Because by then Purandara Dasu met Annamacharya, a popular vocal singer, a singer and great grandfather of poetry.

The grandson of Annamayya, Chinnanna, wrote Annamacharya's biography. In that he mentioned that in the last ages of Annamacharya, Purandara Dasu visited him leaving all his wealth, wedded to dire poverty. Purandara had been to Vyasarayalu of Vijaya Nagaram and got upadesham. He might have been past 30 by the time he visited Annamacharya at Tirupati. If we rely on the writings of Chinnanna, we have to believe that Purandara lived between 1470 and 1564.



## **EXPERTISED IN ALL FIELDS OF EDUCATION**

In 1470 was born a son to Varadappa Nayaka and Kamalamba. The child was named "Srinivasa Nayaka" Varadappa Nayaka was a Madhwa Brahmin. He was an expert jewel merchant and earned quite a lot in business. Following the traditions, he performed sacerdotal ceremony (Upanayanam) of his son and sent him for education at the right age. For the boy there was everything. He was taught Kannada and Sanskrit and trained in Carnatic music. He was also educated in the Dharma Shastra. He grasped the testing skills of Diamonds and Pearls from his father. At 16 Srinivasa Nayaka understood and got expertised in all these disciplines. All this education of his early days contributed a lot in his future life.

## **SARASWATHIBAI THE BETTERHALF**

Srinivasa Nayudu married Saraswathi Bai in his eighteenth year. She was born in a traditional family. She showed a lot of respect and veneration to dharma. She had love and devotion to her husband. She was not only a strong devotee of God but also a compassionate individual to all beings. The couple led an amicable and lovable ideal married life. Being a life partner to her husband, Saraswathi Bai did all that she could for the happiness and joy of her husband. Varadappa nayudu died when his son was twenty. All the business and wealth he inherited. Srinivasa Nayaka gave birth to four sons Varadappa, Guru Rayudu, Abhinavudu, Madhavapathi and a daughter Rukmini Bai.

## **A VERY, VERY MISERLY MAN**

The chief aim in life to srinivasa Nayaka is earning money. So the education he had in his early ages could not change him. He had even lacked humanism which is quite common in many. Paying more attention on earning, he even ignored all the comforts. With his expertise in testing the diamonds, he earned a lot and became "Navakoti Narayana". He never gave a paisa to anybody. As he grew richer and richer, he became more miserly.

It became an inherent quality. He treated beggars as his enemies. He always repelled all the sayings of dharma and felt that it was only for earning money. He became an athiest. Saraswathi Bai felt very sad at this unwanted development. Her humanity, devotion and compassion stood out quite contrary to her hard hearted, atheistic, money minded husband. She felt quite sad for this. Quite often he would visit Vijayanagar on his business. Fortunately this miserly attitude did not continue long.

## **ENOUGH IF YOU GIVE YOUR NOSE JEWEL (MUKKUPUDAKA)**

Meanwhile a strange incident happened and that brought over a change in Srinivasa Nayaka. One day an old Brahmin came to him with a boy asking for some help to perform his son's sacerdotal ceremony (Upanayanam) Srinivasa Nayaka knows the ways of earning but he is a stranger to the aspect of spending in



the right way. So, he used to ask the old Brahmin to see him the following day every time he approached.

One day the old Brahmin wanted to know whether Srinivasa Nayaka would give him anything or not. Srinivasa Nayaka was also fed up with him and wanted to keep the Brahmin away. Having searched long, he brought two invalid coins and gave him. The old man took them and left. The Brahmin straight away went to Srinivasa Nayaka's house and prayed to Saraswathi Bai. She very politely said "I have no money". She felt sorry for not being in a position to help. The old man said that it would be just enough if she gave him her nose jewel. Next moment she gave that to him with no hesitation.

### NOSE JEWEL IN POISON-CUP

The Brahmin went to Srinivasa Nayaka and asked him to value the nose jewel and give him money. Being an expert in testing jewels with just a look at the ornament, he understood that it belonged to his better half and asked the old Brahmin to take money after some time. Having gone home, he found the nose jewel of his wife missing. Being afraid of the consequences there of, the lady entered into the prayer hall and decided to take poison. At that juncture there appeared a nose jewel in the poison cup. Feeling extremely happy and surprised, Saraswathi Bai showed that nose jewel to her husband. He went back to his shop and did not find the nose jewel in the place where he had kept. Utterly surprised he again came to his wife and asked what

had actually happened. She told him quite clearly all the things in detail. He understood that it was a great incident. And the old man was none other than the god who came to make him open his eyes. This brought over a change in him.

### **SARASWATHI BAI FELT HAPPY**

Srinivasa Nayaka got enlightened. He searched for that old Brahmin in every nook and corner of the village in vain. Somebody told him that the old man was found heading towards the temple of Vittala. He went there but did not find him. He became anxious. He asked his wife about what the old man said. She detailed to him the summary of the old man's words. Renouncing all the wealth, if Srinivasa Nayaka devotes all his life in the service of god, he would appear before him. The next moment Srinivasa Nayaka followed the old Brahmins words and renounced everything he had and became poor by disowning all his wealth. He wanted to live the life of a poor person along with his family. His better-half felt extremely happy with this change in her husband. Srinivasa Nayaka took the form of a Dasa by wearing rosary in the neck, and a lyre on the shoulders. The Navakoti Narayana of the erstwhile moment transformed himself into an absolutely devoted Dasa in the service of God.

### **HURLED AWAY**

Vyasarayalu was famous as the chief propagator of Madhwa Sect in Hampi, the capital of the then Vijayanagara. Srinivasa Nayaka went there along with

his family. It was a thick forest. There was nobody with him. He understood that his wife was anxious and afraid. She expressed her fear that there might be thieves. Then Srinivasa Nayaka made it very clear to her that they had no wealth that thieves can steal "We left everything. There is no need of fear for us"

"But she said

"Ah, "but" he retorted

We have a small gold utensil.

"Oh! Give it to me" he said. He took the gold utensil and threw it into the jungle to the astonishment of his wife.

"Now, there is no need of any fear. We can continue our journey quite quietly." Saraswathi Bai took a breath of relief. They had a happy trip to Hampi.

### **I ALREADY KNEW IT**

That morning Srinivasa Nayaka went to visit Vyasarayalu, who was in prayer. After prayer Vyasarayalu called Srinivasa to take the Prasadam. Srinivasa Nayaka prostrated on the lotus feet of Vyasarayalu.

"I know that you will come. I am quite happy. Now onwards you are my chief disciple. Write hymns with the Mudra 'Purandara Vittala' and propagate Bhakthi". Thus said Vyasarayalu initiating him into Madhwa religion and enunciated the principles to be followed by a haridasa. Since that day of initiation Srinivasarayalu became popular as Purandara Dasu and experienced the sweet flavour of Dasa's life.



### POPULAR AS A WRITER OF HYMNS

Purandara Das wrote four lakh seventy five thousand hymns describing devotion and renunciation. But only a few hundred hymns are available now. With this Purandara Dasa became popular as the best writer of hymns. All the credit goes to Vyasa Rayalu, who got initiation from Sripada Rayalu, a native of Mulbagal, of Kolar District, Karnataka State. These two are philosophers, scholars and saints. They are the great men who propagated the Dwaitha philosophy of Madhwacharya in Kannada by way of the Brahmasutras. Vyasa Raya with the sign 'Srikrishna' and Sripada Raya with the sign 'Ranga Vittala' wrote hymns. Knowledge and Meditation, Recitation and Tapas, Mantra and Tantra were initiated to Purandara Dasa. Those days religious discourses took place in Sanskrit language only. They had erudition in 'Sruti' and 'Smruthi'. Purandara Dasa wrote hymns in the common man's language for Kannadigas.

### "DASARANDARE PURANDARA DASARAIAH"

Two sects "Vyasa Kutami" and "Dasa Kutami" were formed. Purandara carried out his life by begging and singing the names of God. His hymns gained good standards imbibing the knowledge, wisdom and discrimination hidden in Vedas, Shastras and Puranas. The writings of Purandara Dasa proved no less than the Upanishads in quality and basic themes. This was made for ordinary people. His writings became popular as Purandaropanishad in a short period. Hence,

Vyasarayalu praised him Dasarandare Purandara Dasaraiah.

### **DWAITHA, ADWAITHA & VISHISTADWAITHA**

Before knowing about the bhakthi of Purandara Dasa, it is better to observe the 'bhakthi marga' of ancient acharyas. Madhwacharya, Ramanujacharya and Shankaracharya propagated Dwaitha, Vishistadwaitha and Adwaitha respectively. Dwaitha believes that Athma and Paramathma are different, Adwaitha says they are one and the same where as Vishistadwaitha believes that Athma and Paramathma are different but they get unified by joining the Paramatma. There is another point to note that Lord Vishnu is the chief god to Dwaitha and Vishistadwaithas. "Hari Sarvothamudu" Hari is the best of all. He is omnipotent and all the devotees are his disciples or followers or Dasas. Here there is a slight difference. As per Vishistadwaitha if a devotee offers himself to god with all devotion, god blesses him and liberates (raises). Then the Jeevathma (individual soul) merges with the Paramathma (the divine soul). But as per Dwaitha Jeevathma and Paramathma are always different, on the earth and in the heaven as well Karma is more powerful. Only Vairagya shows the path. Knowledge, devotion and discrimination have to go hand in hand. This bhakthi must pave the way for liberation or mukthi.

### **NINE KINDS OF BHAKTHI**

#### **Bhakthi is of nine kinds**

- Shravanam - Listening
- Keerthanam - Singing

- Smaranam - reciting, incantation or enchanting
- Padasevanam - Serving the padas of god
- Archanam - Praying (Pooja) worshipping
- Vandanam - Namaskaram, Pranam
- Dasyam - Service (Serving)
- Sakhyam - Friendship
- Athmanivedanam - Absolute offering of self

In these there are five important Paramabhavas, Madhura (sweet), Vatslya (affection), Sakhya (friendship), Seva (service mindedness) and Shantha (peace), Quietitude, Tranquility, Alankarikas accepted that these Bhavas have gained Rasasthithi. Sripada Rayalu and Vyasa Rayalu grasped all these things from Madhwacharya and Purandara Dasa got them from Vysa Rayalu.

### **SWEET DEVOTION**

In the songs of Purandara Dasa there are five kinds of Bhakthi and five most subtle bhavas. We find the Bhagavatha Bhakthi of Radha Krishna and Gopi Krishna in the hymns of Purandara Dasu. There is a clear Madhura Bhakthi through which Purandara Dasa described the Srikrishna Leelas such as stealing of cheese by Balakrishna, appealing of Gopikas to Yashoda and the happy journeys of Krishna with Gopikas. In the same way he narrated the concepts of devotion, knowledge, morality, self-renunciation in a lucid and simple style which is comprehensible to one and all.



## CHANT THE NAME OF HARI

Hari is the best of all. Bhakthi with self offering is important. Bhakthi is the root or source of liberation. All pomp and show without Bhakthi is vain. In this Kaliyuga enchanting of the name of Hari gives liberation. So oh! Mind get liberty with the incantation of Lord Hari's name. A deep rooted devotion is more important than bathing, enchanting and meditation. Along with Bhakthi, man should gain knowledge. Purandaradas knows the essence of life. He condemned all the malpractices that were in vogue and preached the importance of morality in life. He explained Vairagya or renunciation. All these can clearly be found in his hymns or writings.

## EAT TO LIVE

As a dasa he faced many hardships. He encountered all those challenges successfully with the divine grace of Lord Krishna. All the hurdles on the way made him nearer to Lord Krishna and he enjoyed the bliss of his association and blessings. His egoism disappeared.

Those hardships never troubled him much. Moreover he enjoyed the close association of Sri Krishna and got warded off all those hurdles and felt comfortable.

All the egoism disappeared. In a short period he enjoyed peace of life much better than his expectation. In the life of this great Purandara Dasa many distinctions and miracles occurred. Bhakthi is more prominent than wealth and prosperity.

By his living he proved that eating food is necessary only to sustain life. He was a distinguished personality, who dedicated all his life to propagate his beliefs and theories among common men in their language by way of singing playfully. He emancipated the lives of people and inspired and sparkled the way of bhakthi in them. He was always in the forefront of all devotees (bhakthas).

## HOW TO HONOUR GUESTS

An incident took place when Purandara Dasa was spending his life at Vijaya Nagaram as a Haridasa. Having sacrificed everything he had, Purandara took up chiritalu, harp (tambura) anklets (gajjelu) and walked along the streets with his children preaching and singing. He lived with whatever alms he got. One day a relative visited his house. Purandara did not return from Bhajan by then. To receive and honour the guest in a befitting manner, there was little in the house. Saraswathi Bai felt a lot and went to her neighbour Mylarappa's wife and managed to get Alchemy. She made some gold with its help and sold it to get all the grocery required. She prepared everything. Meanwhile, the host Purandara came and knew everything from his wife. Without any delay he saw that the alchemy and the items getting ready in the kitchen were hurled into Pushkarni or the holy pond. A person who lives by means of alms cannot arrange a royal reception to his guests. Only those guests who readily come forward to share with his humble profile would be welcome at his house. The relative went away scolding Purandara.

Saraswathi Bai also felt unhappy for some time. The wife of Mylarappa insisted on the return of the 'Parusavedi' or the Alchemy she gave.

### **MYLARAPPA BECAME A DASA**

Having been ordered by his father, Madhwapathi plunged into the holy pond and brought four alchemies or Parusavedis out. Mylarappa's wife felt very happy. But having understood the essence of Purandara's teachings and living, Mylarappa fell on Purandara's feet and begged him to forgive. "Purandara Vittala himself would forgive you" said Parandara Dasa. With this Mylarappa shun the Parusavedis and all the wealth and then accepted the life of a devotee and a Dasa. Purandara transformed many people into devotees.

### **WEDDED TO POVERTY**

Vyasa Raya, the guru of Purandara, was the Royal Preceptor or Raja Guru of Krishna Devarayalu who ruled Vijaya Nagara with Hampi as capital. In the rule of Krishna Devarayalu, Vijaya Nagar Kingdom gained all prominence and glory. On one occasion, Vyasa Raya saved Krishna Devarayalu from the most dangerous "Kuhoo Yoga". Vyasa Raya sat on the throne at that dangerous hour and saved his king. The king honoured his guru with great wealth, acres of land and Jewellery. In the same way the king honoured Purandara Das bounteously appreciating his simple life. Purandara Das distributed all that wealth to the poor and wedded to his erstwhile poor life. He never had any passion for money and material gains.

### **WHICH WEALTH IS GREAT? YOURS! OR MINE!**

Krishna Devarayalu could not know the reason for this attitude of Purandara Dasa and once invited him to his court. He doubted that the gifts given by him might not have satisfied him. Purandara Dasa narrated how he renounced the title "Navakoti Narayana" for all the wealth he had and chose to live the life of a poor beggar. He sang to establish the superiority of an all renounced sadhu to even a king in possession of all wealth.

Having listened to that hymn, Krishna Devaraya felt immensely pleased and honoured Purandara Dasa treating him as an Avatara of Purandara Vittala himself.

### **THOSE TWO ONLY KNEW**

These two incidents reveal that Purandara Dasa had no lust for wealth. Likewise there are a few instances which speak about the way he made god his Dasa. Purandara used to visit Tirupati many a time along with Vyasa Rayalu. As already has been mentioned or known he visited the famous Sankeerthanacharya of Tirupati, Annamacharya, and praised him regarding him as Lord Venkateshwara. At the same time Annamayya praised Purandara as Purandara Vittala. Common people may not know their greatness but those two great men know each other.

### **GOD HIMSELF SERVED**

Krishna Devarayalu visited Tirupati and performed several kainkaryam (pooja) several times along with

his guru Vyasa Rayalu. Once Purandara Dasu also accompanied them. Purandara Dasu began doing Annadanam to poor people. Then ghee was not sufficient to serve at dining. Immediately Purandara Dasu ordered his disciple Appanna to get ghee. Appanna could not pay attention due to the stress in his job. He did not go to get ghee. But somebody who looked like Appanna brought ghee. The serving was completely over. Purandara came to know of this later. He understood that God himself came to serve him and felt greatly joyful. He begged Purandara Vittala for pardon. Purandara was a great bhaktha who got the services of god himself.

### **HURT VITTALA**

There is an incident similar to this. It is more wondering. Purandara Dasu was busy in the service of Purandar Vittala in Pandaripuram. It was night. Feeling very thirsty Purandara Dasu called Appanna to fetch water for him. Being drowsy Appanna did not immediately respond. Some disciple gave him water. As it was very late Purandara struck him on the head. Appanna left and his guru slept. Next morning the priests noticed that the head of God's idol is swelling. Tears were rolling down. The swelling did not go and tears did not stop inspite of their trials. Knowing this Purandara Dasu entered the Sanctum Sanctorum (garbhalayam). He understood the miracle and the matter behind it. He became aware of the fact that the night before he beat not his disciple Appanna but

Purandara Vittala himself. He felt a lot for that and begged for pardon. Having been pleased by the devotion of Purandara Dasa God Purandara Vittala forgave him with all grace. The swelling disappeared and the tears stopped. All those who saw this incident praised eloquently the devotion of Puranadara Dasa and wondered at the miracle.

### **LEAVE HIM, HE IS INNOCENT**

There is another strange account. Once the gold bracelet of Purandara Vittala Swami disappeared. Priests searched for it in vain. Ultimately, they found the bracelet to the hands of a popular harlot or veshya. She came to worship Vittla Swami. The priests asked her about the bracelet. She answered that it was her own. It was quite similar to the one adorned to the hands of the idol. The chief priest admonished the woman how she got it as it decidedly belonged to Purandara Vittala. She repeated that it was her own. "You have stolen the bracelet of our Swami" said the chief priest.

"No, I did not steal it, it is my own" replied the lady without any fear.

The head priest was very angry and said that besides stealing the bracelet the woman took to lying. He wanted to penalize her severely.

"Why punishment when I did not do any crime" the lady questioned in a doubled tone.

Mad with anger the head priest passed orders to scourge her tying to a pillar.

The woman could not bear those beatings and told the fact that the night before Purandara Dasa came to her and gave the bracelet. The priests could not believe it. Yet, they called for Purandara Dasa immediately and asked. Being wondered he repeated that he did not know anything. They tied Purandara Dasa to the same pillar and scourged. Purandara Dasu received the punishment happily. He understood that it was all the Leela of Vittala. It was very clear to his mind that Purandar Vittala himself had been to the house of harlot or veshya and gave that bracelet to her. The beatings continued. Meanwhile, from the Sanctum Sanctorum came out the words, "Dasu did not know anything. Leave him". Next minute the officers relieved him and begged for forgiveness. Purandara forgave them happily. He understood that it was all the result for the beatings he gave to Purandara Vittala who served him in the guise of a disciple or shishya. He said that it was all god almighty's greatness. He wrote a song with the Pallavi that he took "Muyyuki, Muyyi". Many such miracles took place in his life. He was a great devotee who got the services of God himself.

### **ALL ARE INFLUENCED**

The contribution of Purandara Dasa to Carnatic system of music is very valuable. He used about seventy to eighty thousand ragas. It is clear from the hymns he sang. He saw to it that the Dhathu and Mathu viz music and literature in his hymns are easy and simple. He graced all the rithis of tala. He made the practice of our

music easier. He wrote to suit the needs of the learners. Even today it is taught in the same tradition. All those writers following Purandara Dasa were influenced by him.

Purandara Dasa wrote melodiously in Kannada. Let us taste some of them.

### **HAVE YOU SEEN LORD VENKATESHWARA**

Have you seen the wealthy Venkateshwara  
Have you seen the prosperous king  
and the principal jewel of Tirumala  
One with the anklets  
One who adorned golden girdle on the green dress  
(Peethambaram)  
One who has a brightly shining jewel  
One who has a golden garland, a shining brooch  
(loket) and a carbuncle  
This song narrates Lord Venkateshwara in a  
picturesque manner.

### **THE BABUL TREE (THUMMA CHETTU)**

Evil men on the earth are like Babul Tree  
From Top to bottom there are thorns  
No shade and shelter to those who came to rest  
No fruits to eat for those who are hungry  
And no fragrance in the flowers  
And no place to sit down  
Bitter and venomous is the Juice of its nuts  
This song compares an evil minded person with a  
thorny tree.

## PRAY SRIKANTHA

Teeth are loosened  
 Lymbs have lost their stiffness.  
 Women are detesting graying age (decaying age)  
 Why feel sorrow for decaying body  
 O mind! know this and pray Lord Srikantha.  
 This hymn describes naturally the Vyragya of old  
 age in Swabhavokthi (in a natural tone)

### THE PURANDARA DASA MANDAPAM (PANDAL)

Having written in a natural way preaching the innumerable human beings, Purandara Dasa lived for a long time in Hampi and with the instruction of his guru, went on a pilgrimage. He visited Tirupati, Ahobilam, Kanchi and Belur. He wrote with the sign or Mudra of those Gods of the (great places) Kshethras, whenever he visited them. Of all the places, he visited Tirupati very frequently. Many of his hymns written with this Mudra or sign stand a living proof for this. It is also said that Krishna Deva Raya constructed a special Pandal for him at Tirupati. Purandara used to perform his worship in that.

Purandara brought the writing of hymns for prayer into prominence. He also elevated Carnatic music and literature to venerable heights. He made royal roads to Carnatic system of music and became a beacon light to a great many vocalists (Vaggeyakaras). That is why he became popular with the title the Grand Father of Carnatic music.

## TOLERANCE

Purandara tried his best to bring forth tolerance by removing religious prejudices and avarice between religions and sects. He protested against the discrimination of religion, sect, caste and colour. Tolerance is his great quality. Though he has taken up the Dwaitha Philosophy of Madhwacharya, he never confronted with Vishishtadwaitha and Adwaitha. He behaved in a friendly way even with Shivites. He loved Harijans greatly. He felt that Harijans by Karma are meaner than the Harijans by their birth.

Purandara Dasa is a great person who emancipated the mankind. He is ever honourable and venerable to all. He is a great person in the history of mankind. He is a Charitardha.

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